

Swim Meet Information

There are seven different age group classifications recognized by US Swimming - 8 & Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18 and Senior/Open. Not all age group classifications are offered at every swim meet. The swimmer's age on the first day of a meet will govern the swimmers age for the entire meet.

Some swim meets set certain qualification standards. In order to qualify in a certain event, a swimmer must have achieved the qualifying time for that particular event before he/she enters a meet like this.

1. Entries:

Our Team Coaches will determine what each swimmer is entered in for meets.

2. Heats and Scoring: Most events consist of more than one heat. A heat consists of a group of swimmers (usually six at a time, depending on the size of the pool) racing against one another. Heats are designated by numbers, and count down to the scoring heat. Your heat sheet will indicate if they are swimming fastest to slowest or slowest to fastest.

3. Times and Records: Swimmers should realize that they are competing against the clock as well as other swimmers in the water. The swimmer's goal should be to improve his/her time at each meet. Learn to read the time standard table with your swimmer. Keep his/her times on a personal swim record so that the swimmer can see how he/she is progressing.

Timers: *Parents, the team is responsible for a certain number of timing chairs at meets based on the number of individual entries. It is your responsibility to make sure that we have parents in those chairs, and relief parents waiting in the wings to replace each other.. We ask that you be considerate of others and take your turn during a meet.*

EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SWIM MEETS BUT, WERE AFRAID TO ASK (or didn't know what to ask)

Swim meets are a great family experience! They're a place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed below are some very in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we are trying to be as specific and as detailed as we possibly can. If you have any questions, please ask one of our "veteran" parents.

Before the Meet Starts

1. Arrive at the pool at least 30 minutes before the scheduled warm-up times. This time will be listed in the meet information handed out to all COLA swimmers and on our website under Meet Info.
2. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's blankets, swim bags and chairs. The team sits together in one place, so look for some familiar faces or the team banner.
3. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool or coach for warm-ups.
4. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her towels are and sit there until the event is called. This is a good time to make sure they have gone to the bathroom, if necessary, get a drink, or just get settled in. Make sure you stay in our team area so coaches can help you get to clerk of course and to events.
5. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.
7. **HEAT SHEETS** - a heat sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. Heat sheets generally sell for \$5 - \$10. It lists all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time." When the team entries are entered, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered with a "no-time" or "NT." A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event.

THE MEET STARTS

1. It is important for any swimmer to know what event numbers he/she will be swimming. Take time to look in the heat sheet and find your swimmers events, heats, and lanes.
2. A swimmer's event number will be called, usually over the loudspeaker, and he/she will be asked to report to the clerk of course. Swimmers should report with his/her cap and goggles.

3. The swimmer swims his race.
4. After each swim:
 - A. Tell your swimmer how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke techniques with them. You need to tell them how proud you are and what a great job they did.
 - B. Take them back to the towel area and relax.
 - C. This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, get a drink or something light to eat.
 - D. The swimmer now waits until his/her next event is called and starts the procedure again.
6. When a swimmer has completed all their events, they and their parents get to leave. Make sure, however, you, as a parent, check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay. It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and he/she is not there.

What to take to the Meet

1. Most important: Team swim suit, team cap and goggles - always bring an extra pair.
2. Towels - Realize your swimmer will be there awhile, so pack at least two.
3. Something to sit on: Example: Blanket or folding chairs. The swimmers will be spending a lot of time on it.
4. Several changes of clothes.
5. Games: Travel games, coloring books, books, playing cards, CD players, anything to pass the time.
6. Food: Each swimmer is usually allowed to bring a cooler. It is may be good to bring snacks. They usually have snack bars at the meet if you would rather that.

Once you have attended one or two meets, this will all become very routine. Please do not hesitate to ask any other COLA parent for help or information!